



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

P800 135-1085

FADRS

October 14, 1980

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Q.W.

Dear Senator Magnuson:

Thank you for your letter of September 22 transmitting the comments of Seattle Mayor Charles Royer on human rights violations in Argentina.

The U.S. has been deeply concerned by human rights violations in Argentina, and we have repeatedly conveyed our concerns to the highest levels of the Argentine Government. We have urged prompt return to full respect for human rights and to the rule of law. In addition, in the international financial institutions we have opposed Argentine requests for loans for projects which do not meet basic human needs. We have no AID programs in Argentina. Security assistance and sales to Argentina, including military training, were terminated on October 1, 1978, when the Kennedy-Humphrey Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act went into effect. Even before that date, we had sharply restricted new military training programs and equipment sales because of human rights considerations.

We have seen reports from a number of sources regarding the conditions under which political prisoners are held in Argentina. Human Rights groups and relatives of the detainees continue to complain about physical mistreatment and psychological pressures on the prisoners. In April 1979, the Argentine Government decreed uniform prison regulations which have led to a general improvement in prison conditions. While conditions reportedly improved significantly for a time after the issuance of the decree, they are reported to have deteriorated thereafter. In May of this year a new decree was issued aimed at uniformly improving conditions, particularly arbitrary use of authority, availability of medical treatment, access to reading material, work and exercise. While initial reports suggest there has been an improvement in these areas since May, Human Rights groups remain concerned, particularly about the psychological conditions affecting prisoners. The International Committee of the Red Cross maintains a regular program of prison visits.

The Honorable
Warren G. Magnuson
United States Senate.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s): _____

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full☐ Classify as _____ ☐ Extend as _____ ☐ Downgrade to _____

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

The problems of missing persons is receiving increased attention in international organizations such as the UN. We hope Argentina will cooperate with these multilateral efforts, particularly with the UN's new expert Working Group on disappeared persons.

Sincerely,



J. Brian Atwood
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

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H: C Williams/CW